

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 13 have been canceled. Claims 25-38, corresponding to non-elected claims, have also been cancelled. Claims 2, 6, 7, 11, 14, 18, 19, and 23 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 2-12, and 14-24 are pending.

Claims 1, 11-12, 13, and 23-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Tobita (U.S. Patent No. 6,377,499). Claims 1 and 13 have been canceled. Claim 11 has been amended to depend from claim 2, and claim 23 has been amended to depend from claim 14.

Applicants' representative is grateful for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-10 and 14-22. Each of claims 2, 6, and 7, which formerly depended from claim 1, have been rewritten as independent claims incorporating the limitations formerly found in claim 1. Similarly, each of claims 14, 18, and 19, which formerly depended from claim 13, have been rewritten as independent claims incorporating the limitations formerly found in claim 13.

Accordingly, independent claims 2, 6-7, 14, and 18-19 are believed to be allowable. Depending claims 3-5, 8-10, 11-12, 15-17, 20-22, and 23-24 are also believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims.

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In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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